

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

DECEMBER 10, 1993

Dear Colleague:

I am pleased to provide you with our solicitations for proposals for our **1994 Jobs Through Recycling Initiative**.

In recent years the collection of secondary materials for recycling has increased dramatically. For example, Biocycle reports that the number of curbside recycling collection programs has increased 500% over the past five years. We recognize the critical need for markets for these materials and the opportunity to harmonize environmental quality and economic viability. As a result, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has committed resources for this pilot initiative to support the fostering of recycling markets.

EPA has about \$2.6 million available to distribute, through a competitive process, in the form of cooperative agreements. We developed two solicitations inviting States, Tribes and organizations representing States and Tribes, to submit proposals for this pilot initiative. One of the solicitations invites proposals which would develop Recycling and Reuse Business Assistance Centers (RBACs). The second invites proposals to establish Recycling Economic Development Advocates (REDAs). We plan to use about \$2 million to stimulate the establishment of four to six RBACs and \$600,000 to help establish 8 - 12 REDAs. **To be considered in this competition for the 1994 Jobs Through Recycling Initiative, proposals must be post-marked no later than February 18, 1994.**

In response to the attached solicitation for RBACs, we hope to receive proposals from recycling market development programs which are mature enough to effectively apply the resources to enhance existing efforts and demonstrate measurable success in the short-term. EPA expects to fund REDAs in a full range of program maturity, from those at a preliminary stage of coordinating market development and economic development activities to those that already have established these efforts and are actively pursuing business development. The two solicitations share the common goal of fostering businesses utilizing secondary materials that will: create or enhance markets for secondary materials which would otherwise be landfilled or incinerated; stimulate economic development; and create jobs. However, RBACs and REDAs differ in major respects, as detailed in the solicitations and highlighted below.

RBACs

The purpose of this component of the initiative is to stimulate the creation of highly visible and identifiable centers of expertise to aggressively foster the use of secondary materials in business and industry. The centers will provide technical, business, financing, and marketing assistance to both existing and new enterprises which use secondary materials (both intermediate processors and end-use manufacturers). Each center will be formed by the cooperative efforts of State or Tribal agencies responsible for recycling market development and for economic development. Thus, each center will serve as an infrastructure to concentrate the combined resources and efforts of multiple agencies to focus on the development of markets for secondary materials. We will entertain proposals only from State and Tribal agencies and organizations with State and Tribal members responsible either for recycling market development or for economic development, business growth, and job creation. Within a State or Tribe, one of the offices will be expected to be the lead, working in close partnership with its committed counterpart (e.g., economic development office or recycling office) in establishing and operating the RBAC infrastructure.

REDAs

States commonly have agencies which are committed to economic development, business growth, and job creation. Secondary materials represent a feedstock on which economic development (i.e., business growth and job creation) can be based. The purpose of this component of the initiative is to enhance the ability of agencies responsible for economic development to focus on enterprises which utilize secondary materials. Each REDA will be a professional dedicated exclusively to the purpose of retaining, expanding, and attracting processors and manufacturers of secondary materials. Each REDA will be located within an agency responsible for economic development but will be expected to serve as a communication link to the solid waste authority. The REDAs' primary purpose is to build a bridge between traditional economic development activities and growth of businesses utilizing secondary materials. We will entertain proposals for REDAs only from State or Tribal economic development agencies.

RBACs and REDAs

Proposers will be expected to provide at least 25% of the total project cost. The 25% matching share is a percentage of the entire cost of the REDA or RBAC project, not a percentage of the federal share. This match will serve to reflect the commitment of the proposer, facilitate measurable progress within the terms of the project period (12 - 18 months), and institutionalize the program for operation beyond the life of the cooperative agreement.

An agency may wish to submit a proposal for an RBAC or a REDA or for both. However, because this is a pilot initiative, EPA is interested in distributing funds widely and to as many viable entities as feasible. Thus, it is not likely that a single State or Tribe would be selected for both a RBAC and a REDA. From the submitted proposals, we will first select the RBAC participants and then select the REDA participants.

EPA developed this Initiative as a joint effort of its Headquarters and ten Regional Offices. It will be largely the responsibility of the Regional Offices to work with selected organizations to implement the Initiative. As explained in the solicitations, proposers should send a copy of their completed proposals to EPA Headquarters and a copy to the EPA Regional Office associated with the location of the proposer (see enclosed list of Regional Offices).

Sincerely,

Bruce R. Weddle, Director
Municipal & Industrial Waste Division

Enclosures